

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Software for converting a general purpose computer into a specialized playlist server for supplying a playlist response to a client device for exchanging information with an information server system over a communications network and storing ads, comprising:

a playlist response generation function for generating a playlist response identifying a plurality of selected ads to be presented by the client device; and

a first communications function that effects a playlist response send communication link with the client device via the communications network over which the playlist response is transmitted to the client device,

wherein the information server system and the playlist server are independently controlled.

2. The software as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

a second communication function that effects a playlist request receive function with the client device via the communications network;

wherein the playlist response generation function further comprises a playlist generation function for generating a playlist included in the playlist response which identifies a plurality of selected ads to be presented by the client device in response to receipt of a playlist request.

3. The software as recited in claim 1, wherein:

the playlist response generated by the playlist server comprises an updated playlist; the playlist currently employed by the client device comprises a current playlist; and the current playlist is replaced by the updated playlist when the client device receives the first playlist.

4. The software as recited in claim 3, wherein the playlist response includes an instruction directing the client device to replace the current playlist with the updated playlist.

5. The software as recited in claim 1, wherein:

- 2 the playlist response generated by the playlist server comprises an updated playlist;
the playlist currently employed by the client device comprises a current playlist; and
4 the current playlist is concatenated with the updated playlist when the client device
receives the first playlist.

6. The software as recited in claim 5, wherein the playlist response includes an
2 instruction directing the client device to concatenate the current playlist and the updated
playlist.

7. The software as recited in claim 1, wherein the playlist response comprises client
2 information and an updated playlist.

8. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the client information controls the
2 presentation of the ads by the client device.

9. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the client information controls turnover
2 rate of the ads presented by the client device.

10. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein:
2 client information specifies the periodicity at which the client device generates a
playlist request; and
4 the playlist generation function generates the playlist responsive to the
playlist request.

11. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the client information includes a
2 minimum time separation between competing ones of the ads.

12. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the client information includes
2 specifications directing the manner in which the client device is to present each of the ads.

13. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the ads include current ads and expired
2 ads, and wherein the client information includes a minimum time period during which the
client device presents the current ads before the client device presents the expired ads.

14. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the ads include current ads and expired
2 ads, and wherein the client information includes a maximum time period during which the
client device is permitted to presents the expired ads.

15. The software as recited in claim 7, wherein the client device switches between a
2 persistent presentation mode and a short-lived presentation mode of presenting the ads
responsive to selected parameters included in the client information.

16. The software as recited in claim 1, wherein the playlist is check-summed at both
the playlist server and the client device to thereby generate respective checksums, and wherein
the playlist received by the client device is ignored when the respective checksums are not
identical.

17. The software as recited in claim 1, wherein the selected ads each include at least
one image.

18. The software as recited in claim 1, wherein the selected ads each include audio
2 data.

19. Software for converting a general purpose computer into a specialized playlist
2 server for supplying a playlist response to a client device exchanging information with an
information server system and receiving ads from an ad server over a communications
4 network, comprising:

a playlist response generation function for generating a playlist response identifying a
6 plurality of selected ads to be presented by the client device; and

a first communications function that effects a playlist response send communication
link with the client device via the communications network over which the playlist response is
transmitted to the client device,

wherein the information server system and the playlist server are independently
controlled.

20. The software as recited in claim 19, further comprising:

a second communication function that effects a playlist request receive function with
the client device via the communications network;

wherein the playlist response generation function further comprises a playlist
generation function for generating a playlist included in the playlist response which identifies
a plurality of selected ads to be presented by the client device in response to receipt of the
playlist request.

21. The software as recited in claim 20, further comprising:

a playlist request parsing function for extracting selected information from the playlist
request; and

a selected information supply function for supplying the selected information to the
playlist generation function to thereby initiate the playlist generation function.

22. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein the selected information identifies the
client device as one of a hardware client device and a software client device.

23. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the playlist server responds to the
playlist request by either by transmitting to the client device an indication that the current
playlist is valid and does not need to be updated, or by transmitting to the client device the
playlist response including an updated playlist.

24. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes at
least one of user demographics and user/client device behavior.

25. The software as recited in Claim 24, wherein the playlist response includes an
2 updated playlist generated by the playlist server based at least partially on one of user
demographics and/or user/client device behavior.

26. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes an
2 identification of a current playlist associated with the client device.

27. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein:
2 the selected information comprises information stored in a user data field identifying
current playlists controlling presentation of respective groups of the selected ads by the client
4 device; and
6 the playlist response includes an updated playlist generated by the playlist server based
on the current playlists.

28. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein:
2 the selected information comprises information stored in a user data field; and
4 the playlist response includes an updated playlist generated by the playlist server based
at least partially on the information contained in the user data field.

29. The software as recited in Claim 28, wherein the user data field includes
2 information indicative of usage history of the client device.

30. The software as recited in Claim 28, wherein the user data field includes a user
2 data field identifying the respective software operating on the client device.

31. The software as recited in Claim 30, wherein the user data field further includes
2 information identifying an operating system of the client device on which the software is
running.

32. The software as recited in Claim 28, wherein:
2 the user data field comprises:

a first data field including information identifying the respective software operating on the client device;

a second user data field including information identifying an operating system of the client device on which the respective software is running; and

the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based at least partially on the information contained in the first and second user data fields contained in the playlist request.

33. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes usage data relating to the amount of time the user has used the client device over a prescribed time interval.

34. The software as recited in Claim 33, wherein the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based at least partially on the usage data.

35. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes a display time remaining data field that specifies the total amount of display time required for the stored ads that remain to be presented by the client device.

36. The software as recited in Claim 35, wherein the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based at least partially on the display time remaining data field.

37. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the playlist request includes a display time used recently data field that specifies the total amount of times that ads were presented by the client device during a prescribed time interval.

38. The software as recited in Claim 37, wherein the prescribed time interval comprises the present day.

39. The software as recited in Claim 37, wherein the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based at least partially on the display time used recently data field.

40. The software as recited in Claim 39, wherein the prescribed time interval comprises the present day.

41. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information further includes client device display screen data that specifies dimensions of a display screen associated with the client device.

42. The software as recited in Claim 41, wherein the dimensions include the height, width, and depth of the display screen, in pixels.

43. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes a distributor ID identifying the distributor of the client device.

44. The software as recited in Claim 43, wherein the distributor ID is used in selecting at least one characteristic of the ads presented by the client device.

45. The software as recited in Claim 44, wherein the playlist response includes an updated playlist identifying ads which are presentable only by the client device having the respective distributor ID.

46. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes a list of the ad identifiers corresponding to ads that have been presented by the client device during a prescribed recent time interval.

47. The software as recited in Claim 46, wherein the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based at least partially on the advertisements that have been displayed in a prescribed recent time interval identified in the playlist request.

48. The software as recited in Claim 21, wherein the selected information includes at least two of :
a first user data field identifying a current playlist;

4 a second user data field identifying user demographic data;
a third user data field identifying user/client device behavior data;
6 a fourth user data field identifying usage history of the client device;
a fifth user data field identifying the respective software operating on the client device;
8 a sixth user data field identifying the respective operating system of the client device;
a seventh user data field identifying the amount of time the user has used client device
10 over a prescribed time interval;
an eighth user data field identifying the total amount of display time required for the
12 stored ads that remain to be presented by the client device;
a ninth user data field identifying the total amount of times that ads were presented by
14 the client device during the prescribed time interval;
a tenth user data field identifying the dimensions of a display screen associated with
16 the client device; and
a list of the ad identifiers corresponding to advertisements that have been displayed in
18 the prescribed most recent time interval.

49. The software as recited in Claim 48, wherein the playlist server responds to the
playlist request by either by transmitting to the client device an indication that the current
playlist is valid and does not need to be updated, or by transmitting to the client device the
playlist response including an updated playlist.

50. The software as recited in Claim 48, wherein the playlist response is generated by
the playlist server responsive to field data included in at least two of the first through tenth
user data fields.

51. The software as recited in Claim 48, wherein the playlist response is generated by
the playlist server responsive to one of the first through tenth user data fields and the list of the
ad identifiers included in the selected information.

52. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein the playlist response comprises an
updated playlist identifying an ad type for one of the respective ads.

53. The software as recited in claim 52, wherein the ad type corresponds to a postage
2 stamp ad.

54. The software as recited in claim 52, wherein the ad type corresponds to a toolbar
2 ad.

55. The software as recited in claim 52, wherein the ad type corresponds to a placard
2 ad.

56. The software as recited in claim 52, wherein the ad type indicates the timing
2 employed by the client device in presenting the respective one of the ads.

57. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein the selected information identifies a
2 distributor of the client device.

58. The software as recited in claim 57, wherein:
2 the client device comprises a software client device;
the distributor provides the respective software for instantiating the software client
4 device; and
the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based on the identity of the
6 distributor.

59. The software as recited in claim 57, wherein:
2 the client device comprises a hardware client device;
the distributor provides the hardware client device to the user;
4 the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based on the identity of the
distributor.

60. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein the playlist request comprises an
2 extensible markup language (XML) playlist request.

61. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein the playlist request parsing function
2 employs a document type definition (DTD).

62. The software as recited in claim 61, wherein a respective DTD corresponding to
2 one of a plurality of client device types is stored by the playlist server.

63. The software as recited in claim 61, wherein the DTD is embedded in the playlist
2 request.

64. The software as recited in claim 63, wherein the DTD is specific to one of a
2 plurality of client device types.

65. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein:
the playlist request comprises an extensible markup language (XML) playlist request;
the playlist request includes a document type definition (DTD) tag identifying a DTD
4 associated with the XML playlist request;
the playlist server stores a respective DTD corresponding to the DTD tag; and
the playlist request parsing function employs the DTD corresponding to the DTD tag.

66. The software as recited in claim 21, wherein the playlist parsing function further
2 comprises:

an extensible markup language (XML) parsing function for verifying the
4 wellformedness of the playlist request;

a playlist analysis function receiving the playlist request after verification by the XML
6 parsing function for generating an object;

a database driver function receiving the object for building a query from the object and
8 applying the query to a playlist server database.

67. The software as recited in claim 66, wherein the playlist analysis function receives
2 the output of the database driver and constructs the playlist response.

68. The software as recited in claim 66, wherein the database driver further comprises:
2 a database communications function that effect a communication link between the
playlist analysis function and the database;
4 a query function for executing the query, which includes at least one SQL statement;
and
6 a retrieve function for retrieving database outputs responsive to the query and
providing the database output to the playlist analysis function.

69. The software as recited in claim 20, wherein the playlist response generation
2 function generates one of an action command and the playlist response.

70. The software as recited in claim 69, wherein the playlist response comprises a
2 combination of client information and an updated playlist.

71. The software as recited in claim 70, wherein the updated playlist comprises a
2 name and a corresponding uniform resource identifier (URI) for selected ones of the ads.

72. The software as recited in claim 69, wherein the playlist response generation
4 function generates the action command in response to receipt of a garbled playlist request.

73. The software as recited in claim 72, wherein the action command further
2 comprises an error code directing the client device to send a new playlist request.

74. The software as recited in claim 72, wherein the action command further
2 comprises an error message which is presentable to the user by the client device.

75. The software as recited in claim 69, wherein the action command causes the client
2 device to delete all of the ads received by the client device responsive to a command issued to
the playlist server by an entity controlling the playlist server.

76. The software as recited in claim 20, wherein the playlist response includes client information and an updated playlist comprising a name and a corresponding uniform resource identifier (URI) for each of the selected ads.

77. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the URI corresponds to a storage location of the respective named ad on the ad server.

78. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the URI specifies a location on the ad server redirecting the client device to a location on another storage device for the respective named ad.

79. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the URI specifies a location on the ad server redirecting the client device to an ad storage location collocated on the ad server for the respective named ad.

80. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the client information controls the presentation of the ads by the client device.

81. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the client information controls turnover rate of the ads presented by the client device.

82. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the client information specifies the periodicity at which the client device generates the playlist request.

83. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the client information includes a minimum time separation between competing ones of the ads.

84. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the client information includes specifications directing the manner in which the client device is to present each of the ads.

85. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the ads include current ads and expired ads, and wherein the client information includes a minimum time period during which the client device presents the current ads before the client device presents the expired ads.

86. The software as recited in claim 85, wherein the client information includes a maximum time period during which the client device is permitted to present the expired ads.

87. The software as recited in claim 76, wherein the client device switches between a persistent presentation mode and a short-lived presentation mode of presenting the ads responsive to selected parameters included in the client information.

88. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein:
the playlist response generated by the playlist server comprises an updated playlist;
the playlist currently employed by the client device comprises a current playlist; and
the current playlist is replaced by the updated playlist when the client device receives the first playlist.

89. The software as recited in claim 88, wherein the playlist response includes an instruction directing the client device to replace the current playlist with the updated playlist.

90. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein:
the playlist response generated by the playlist server comprises an updated playlist;
the playlist currently employed by the client device comprises a current playlist; and
the current playlist is concatenated with the updated playlist when the client device receives the first playlist.

91. The software as recited in claim 90, wherein the playlist response includes an instruction directing the client device to concatenate the current playlist and the updated playlist.

92. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein the playlist response includes an
2 updated playlist comprising a name and a corresponding uniform resource identifier (URI) for
at least one of the ads.

93. The software as recited in claim 92, wherein the URI corresponds to a storage
2 location of the respective named ad on the ad server.

94. The software as recited in claim 92, wherein the URI specifies a location on the ad
2 server redirecting the client device to a location on another storage device for the respective
named ad.

95. The software as recited in claim 92, wherein the URI specifies a location on the ad
2 server redirecting the client device to an ad storage location collocated on the ad server.

96. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein the playlist response includes client
2 information and an updated playlist comprising a name and a corresponding uniform resource
identifier (URI) for selected ones of the ads.

97. The software as recited in claim 96, wherein:
the selected ones of the ads comprise first and second ads; and
the respective URIs for the first and second ads point to first and second ad servers on
4 which the first and second ads are disposed.

98. The software as recited in claim 97, wherein the first ad server and the playlist
2 server are controlled by a single entity.

99. The software as recited in claim 97, wherein the information server system and the
2 second ad server are controlled by a single entity.

100. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein:

- 2 the playlist response generation function generates the playlist responsive to receipt of
a playlist request; and
- 4 the playlist response comprises both client information and an updated playlist
including a name and a corresponding uniform resource identifier (URI) for selected ones of
6 the ads.

101. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the ad server comprises first and
2 second ad servers controlled by first and second entities, and wherein the selected ones of the
ads are distributed between the first and second ad servers.

102. The software as recited in claim 101, wherein the first entity controls the first ad
server and the playlist server.

103. The software as recited in claim 101, wherein the information server system is
controlled by a third entity independent of the first and second entities.

104. The software as recited in claim 101, wherein:
the information server system comprises first and second information servers
controlled by respective third and fourth entities, and
the first entity is operated independently of the third and fourth entities.

105. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the client information controls the
presentation of the ads by the client device.

106. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the client information controls
turnover rate of the ads presented by the client device.

107. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein:
client information specifies the periodicity at which the client device generates a
playlist request; and
the playlist generation function generates the playlist responsive to the playlist request.

108. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the client information includes a
2 minimum time separation between competing ones of the ads.

109. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the client information includes
2 specifications directing the manner in which the client device is to present each of the ads.

110. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the ads include current ads and
2 expired ads, and wherein the client information includes a minimum time period during which
the client device presents the current ads before the client device presents the expired ads.

111. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the ads include current ads and
2 expired ads, and wherein the client information includes a maximum time period during which
the client device is permitted to presents the expired ads.

112. The software as recited in claim 100, wherein the client device switches between
2 a persistent presentation mode and a short-lived presentation mode of presenting the ads
responsive to selected parameters included in the client information.

113. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein the playlist is check-summed at both
2 the playlist server and the client device to thereby generate respective checksums, and wherein
the playlist received by the client device is ignored when the respective checksums are not
4 identical.

114. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein the selected ads each include at least
2 one image.

115. The software as recited in claim 19, wherein the selected ads each include audio
2 data.

116. Software for converting a general purpose computer into a specialized playlist server for supplying a playlist response to a client device exchanging information with an information server system and receiving ads from an ad server over a communications network, comprising:

a playlist response generation function for generating a playlist response identifying a plurality of selected ads to be presented by the client device;

a playlist request parsing function for extracting selected information from the playlist request, comprising:

an extensible markup language (XML) parsing function for verifying the wellformedness of the playlist request;

a playlist analysis function receiving the playlist request after verification by the XML parsing function for generating an object;

a database driver function receiving the object for building a query from the object and applying the query to a playlist server database;

a playlist generation function receiving an output of the database driver function for generating a playlist for inclusion in the playlist response which identifies a plurality of selected ads to be presented by the client device in response to receipt of a playlist request;

a selected information supply function for supplying the selected information to the playlist response generation function to thereby initiate the playlist generation function;

a first communications function that effects a playlist response send communication link with the client device via the communications network over which the playlist response is transmitted to the client device; and

a second communication function that effects a playlist request receive function with the client device via the communications network,

wherein the information server system and the playlist server are independently controlled.

117. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the selected information identifies the client device as one of a hardware client device and a software client device.

118. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information includes
at least one of user demographics and user/client device behavior.

119. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the database driver further
comprises:

a database communications function that effect a communication link between the
playlist analysis function and the database;

a query function for executing the query, which includes at least one SQL statement;

and

a retrieve function for retrieving database outputs responsive to the query and
providing the database output to the playlist analysis function.

120. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein:

the selected information comprises client information identifying current playlists
controlling presentation of respective groups of the selected ads by the client device; and

the playlist response includes an updated playlist generated by the playlist server based
on the current playlists.

121. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein:

the selected information comprises client information; and

the playlist response includes an updated playlist generated by the playlist server based
at least partially on the client information contained in the playlist request.

122. The software as recited in Claim 121, wherein the client information includes
information indicative of usage history of the client device.

123. The software as recited in Claim 121, wherein the client information includes a
user data field identifying the respective software operating on the client device.

124. The software as recited in Claim 123, wherein the user data field further includes
2 information identifying an operating system of the client device on which the software is
running.

125. The software as recited in Claim 121, wherein:
2 the client information includes a user data field; and
the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based at least partially on the
4 client information contained in the playlist request.

126. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information includes
2 usage data relating to the amount of time the user has used the client device over a prescribed
time interval.

127. The software as recited in Claim 126, wherein the playlist response is generated
2 by the playlist server based at least partially on the usage data.

128. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information includes a
2 display time remaining data field that specifies the total amount of display time required for
the stored ads that remain to be presented by the client device.

129. The software as recited in Claim 128, wherein the playlist response is generated
2 by the playlist server based at least partially on the display time remaining data field.

130. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the playlist request includes a
2 display time used recently data field that specifies the total amount of times that ads were
presented by the client device during a prescribed time interval.

131. The software as recited in Claim 130, wherein the prescribed time interval
2 comprises the present day.

132. The software as recited in Claim 130, wherein the playlist response is generated
2 by the playlist server based at least partially on the display time used recently data field.

133. The software as recited in Claim 132, wherein the prescribed time interval
2 comprises the present day.

134. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information further
2 includes client device display screen data that specifies dimensions of a display screen
associated with the client device.

135. The software as recited in Claim 134, wherein the dimensions include the height,
width, and depth of the display screen, in pixels.

136. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information includes a
2 distributor ID identifying the distributor of the client device.

137. The software as recited in Claim 136, wherein the distributor ID is used in
2 selecting at least one characteristic of the ads presented by the client device.

138. The software as recited in Claim 136, wherein the playlist response includes an
2 updated playlist identifying ads which are presentable only by the client device having the
respective distributor ID.

139. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information includes a
2 list of the ad identifiers corresponding to ads that have been presented by the client device
during a prescribed recent time interval.

140. The software as recited in Claim 139, wherein the playlist response is generated
2 by the playlist server based at least partially on the advertisements that have been displayed in
a prescribed recent time interval identified in the playlist request.

141. The software as recited in Claim 116, wherein the selected information includes
at least two of :
a first user data field identifying a current playlist;
a second user data field identifying user demographic data;
a third user data field identifying user/client device behavior data;
a fourth user data field identifying usage history of the client device;
a fifth user data field identifying the respective software operating on the client device;
a sixth user data field identifying the respective operating system of the client device;
a seventh user data field identifying the amount of time the user has used client device
over a prescribed time interval;
an eighth user data field identifying the total amount of display time required for the
stored ads that remain to be presented by the client device;
a ninth user data field identifying the total amount of times that ads were presented by
the client device during the prescribed time interval;
a tenth user data field identifying the dimensions of a display screen associated with
the client device; and
a list of the ad identifiers corresponding to advertisements that have been displayed in
the prescribed most recent time interval.

142. The software as recited in Claim 141, wherein the playlist server responds to the
playlist request by either by transmitting to the client device an indication that the current
playlist is valid and does not need to be updated, or by transmitting to the client device the
playlist response including an updated playlist.

143. The software as recited in Claim 141, wherein the playlist response is generated
by the playlist server responsive to field data included in at least two of the first through tenth
user data fields.

144. The software as recited in Claim 141, wherein the playlist response is generated
by the playlist server responsive to one of the first through tenth user data fields and the list of
the ad identifiers included in the selected information.

145. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the playlist response comprises an
2 updated playlist identifying an ad type for one of the respective ads.

146. The software as recited in claim 145, wherein the ad type corresponds to a
2 postage stamp ad.

147. The software as recited in claim 145, wherein the ad type corresponds to a toolbar
2 ad.

148. The software as recited in claim 145, wherein the ad type corresponds to a
placard ad.

149. The software as recited in claim 145, wherein the ad type indicates the timing
2 employed by the client device in presenting the respective one of the ads.

150. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the selected information identifies
2 a distributor of the client device.

151. The software as recited in claim 150, wherein:
the client device comprises a software client device;
the distributor provides the respective software for instantiating the software client
4 device; and
the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based on the identity of the
6 distributor.

152. The software as recited in claim 150, wherein:
2 the client device comprises a hardware client device;
the distributor provides the hardware client device to the user;
4 the playlist response is generated by the playlist server based on the identity of the
distributor.

153. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the playlist request comprises an
2 extensible markup language (XML) playlist request.

154. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the playlist request parsing
2 function employs a document type definition (DTD).

155. The software as recited in claim 154, wherein a respective DTD corresponding to
2 one of a plurality of client device types is stored by the playlist server.

156. The software as recited in claim 154, wherein the DTD is embedded in the
playlist request.

157. The software as recited in claim 156, wherein the DTD is specific to one of a
plurality of client device types.

158. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein:
the playlist request comprises an extensible markup language (XML) playlist request;
the playlist request includes a document type definition (DTD) tag identifying a DTD
associated with the XML playlist request;
the playlist server stores a respective DTD corresponding to the DTD tag; and
the playlist request parsing function employs the DTD corresponding to the DTD tag.

159. The software as recited in claim 116, wherein the playlist analysis function
2 receives the output of the database driver and constructs the playlist response.